1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
FF38 Katab FF38



| | |
|---|---|
| (12) Occupied by distant cousin of (1), his wives and children | Alhaki. |
| (13) Occupied by brother of (3), his wives, children, and brother | Sabo. |
| (14) The *Obwai* shrine | |
| (15) Occupied by distant cousin of (1) | Mugu. |
| (16) Occupied by distant cousin of (1) and children, son, and son's child | Aje. |
| (17) Occupied by brother of (16), wives and children | Baita. |

B

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Occupied by Banhot (head of the kindred) wife and child | Banhot. |
| (2) Occupied by distant cousin of (1), wives, children, and cousin | Kaza. |
| (3) Occupied by member of Nje sub-clan, wives, children, son's wives, and children | Go. |
| (4) Occupied by distant cousin of (1), wife, children, and sons wives, and children | Angulu. |
| (5) Occupied by member of Kagoro tribe, wife, and sons | Agwanjon. |
| (6) Occupied by distant cousin of (1), wives, children, and son | Sambo. |
| (7) Occupied by distant relative of (1), wife, brother, sisters, their husbands and children | Yakok. |
| (8) Occupied by distant relative of (1), wife, child, and son | Agwanjon. |
| (9) Occupied by a member of the Awai sub-clan of Aswen and his children | Sambo. |
| (10) Occupied by a Kpaisa man (Agbat clan) | Alhaki. |
| (11) Occupied by a man of the Morwa tribe and his wife and children | Atokan. |
| (12) Occupied by *Obwai* shrine | |

*The Household.*—The size and composition of the Katab household varies according to circumstances. In its simplest form it consists of the small social group of parents and children, such as in England we should describe as a family. It comes into existence when a son marries, leaves his father's compound, farms on his own account and acquires a family of young children. But as sons may not leave their parents' compound unless the father has other sons to look after him, the normal Katab compound consists of a larger group, viz. parents, sons, and daughters, and sons' wives and their children. On the death of the head of the compound two sons may agree to continue to live and farm together, and the household would then consist of a man and his mother, his wives and children, his brother, and his brother's wives and children. Owing, however, to the extensive system of adoption practised by the Katab, the composition of the household may be more complex and include paternal cousins or nephews. The household is then a purely unilateral grouping, i.e. it consists of patrilineal relatives. But there are exceptions; for it is not uncommon for a household to include a sister's son who belongs, of course, to a different clan, and is debarred

1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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592 428 from any share in the inheritance should the head of the household die.

597 171 *Adoption.*—A word may be said here about the custom of adoption. In some parts of the world, e.g. the Banks Islands, parents seem to have hardly more right to their children than anybody else. The relationship between parent and child, which we are apt to regard as fundamental in human nature, is not, apparently, so regarded by all other peoples in the world. Katab women, for example, in contracting sub-marriages abandon their weaned children. In Polynesia children may pass into the hands of total strangers whether the parents like it or not; and whether the practice is due to an original state of communism or to some early custom of infanticide or some other social cause need not concern us. In Nigeria it is common among the majority of the tribes for parents to hand over one at least of their offspring to others. A Hausa father, for example, generally delivers up his first-born to his wife's family: a Bade his first child, if a female, to his wife's family, if a male to the father's brother; a Nupe his first child, male or female, to the paternal relatives. A Hausa will even hand over one of his children to a friend who may be no relative at all. Among the Katab it is customary to hand over children to a respected paternal relative who has fewer children than the other or who requires an additional worker on his farm. Male children are not handed over to a maternal relative in this way; but we shall see later that a man has to ransom his second child by a money payment to his wife's parents. Female children are, however, sometimes handed over to the mother's parents; but when such children marry, the mother's parents are not entitled to receive the bride-price.

597 A few instances of random cases actually investigated will illustrate the extent to which adoption is practised.

A. had a family of five sons and three daughters. He gave none of his children to any relatives, as all his relatives had children of their own. None of his relatives gave him any of their children, as he had a sufficient number of children of his own.

B. had a family of five sons and four daughters. As a compliment to his elder brother he handed over his eldest daughter at the age of three. She was given in marriage by the elder brother, and as she has since had four husbands, the elder brother has

1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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derived considerable benefit, the bride-price in each case having been appropriated by him. B. also handed over one of his sons to his elder brother, as the elder brother had only one son of his own to look after him, and that son was unable by his own farming efforts to provide for the whole household. B. also gave a son to his younger brother who lived in the same compound as B. That younger brother was murdered, and the son has reverted to the custody of his father. B. has, therefore, handed over three of his nine children to relatives. Moreover, he handed over one of his younger brother's orphan children to the care of his (B's) grown-up grandson.

C. had a family of six daughters and two sons. He handed over his eldest daughter to his male ortho-cousin, her economic services being thus placed at the disposal of the cousin's wives. The cousin will arrange the girl's marriage, receive the bride-price, provide the wedding outfit, and again receive the bride-price on each occasion that she remarries. His second daughter was similarly handed over to another ortho-cousin. Both these cousins occupied a separate portion of C's compound. The other children are with C. who has yet another cousin living with him. C. does no farming work himself, and his two eldest boys, therefore, work daily under the direction of this cousin. It is *infra dignitatem* for the head of a large compound to engage personally in agriculture; and this brings us to the subject of the control of the economic resources of the household.

A. may have been 37 years of age—he was certainly not over 40. But having been successful in life, i.e. having a large number of children (which implies capital and the ability to purchase wives), he does no farm work. He relies on his sons whose energies he directs, offering advice as to the extent of the farm required each year, but avoiding all direct interference as regards the disposal of the corn harvested. That is to say, he would never enter his son's granary and help himself to corn. He possesses no granary of his own. One of the sons issues each day the amount of corn required for the whole compound. A. will find for himself the amount of the tax required by the Administration. His sons can find their own from the sale of corn, though A. might say "Do not touch the corn—we may require it all. I will see what I can do on my own initiative".

B. similarly does no farm work. He has two sons who farm

1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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together, and each, being married, has his own granary with which B. does not interfere. He and his wives are supported by the sons. B. may have to call on his sons to provide the tax by the sale of corn. But the women of the compound, being the owners of bean farms, and able also to obtain cash by the sale of firewood, may contribute towards the cost of the tax in order to avoid drawing too extensively on the reserves of corn. B., who is not a very old man, and may wish to add to the number of his wives, may direct his sons to sell some of their corn in order to find the bride-price.

C. has three cousins (ortho-cousins) in his compound. Two of these occupy one part of the compound and farm together. These cousins have their own corn granary, and C. would have no claim at all on their corn. If, however, the supplies in his own part of the compound ran short, C. might ask his cousins to help him out of the difficulty. He might even ask his cousins to assist him in the matter of paying tax. But any advances of this kind would be regarded purely and simply as a loan, C. being the senior of the household. On the other hand, if a younger "brother" had to borrow from an elder, the elder would not think of asking his younger brother to repay him later.

C. with a third cousin and their respective families occupies a separate part of the compound. Though he is only 30 years of age, C., being the head of the compound, has given up all farming work, which is carried out by the cousin and C's two sons. They have a common granary, for it is a custom that those who farm together share their corn. The granary is under the control of C's cousin who directs C's son as to the amount of corn that should be issued daily. C. has no say in the matter, but in the event of having to entertain strangers C. may ask the cousin to issue the necessary extra corn. C. may also demand some of the corn harvested by his son to pay his tax.

It will be seen, therefore, that, apart from the natural claim which a father has to be supported by his sons, there is in a Katab household no such thing as a real community of stocks. The head of a compound has no claim on the corn of a brother or cousin who farms by himself, and he does not, therefore, hold himself responsible if the brother or cousin fails to farm sufficient corn to pay his tax.

1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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## THE KATAB AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS '19

The following is a plan of a typical Katab compound :—

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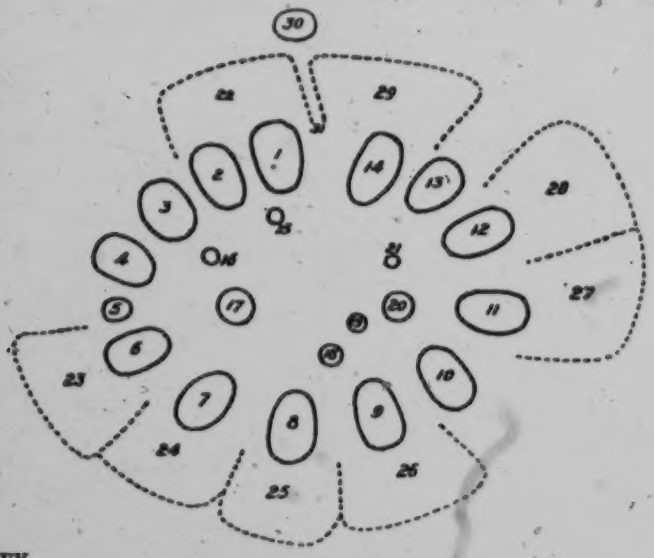


KEY.

(1) Hut of the master of the compound.
(2) Hut of the second wife of the master of the compound.
(3) Empty hut of runaway wife of master of the compound.
(4) Empty hut of runaway wife of master of the compound.
(5) Disused hut built to fill in space between (4) and (6).
(6) Hut of first wife of elder son.
(7) Hut of second wife of elder son.
(8) Hut of mother of the master of the compound.
(9) Hut of first wife of younger son.
(10) Empty hut of younger son's runaway wife.
(11) Hut of second wife of younger son.
(12) Hut of third wife of younger son.
(13) Hut used by master of compound and his two sons as a common meeting room and dining room.
(14) Hut of the principal wife and mistress of the compound.
(15) Small granary containing grain for use of master of the compound.
(16) Small granary containing grain for use of elder son.
(17) Large granary containing grain belonging to elder son.
(18) Goat pen belonging to elder son.
(19) Goat pen belonging to younger son.
(20) Large granary containing grain belonging to younger son.
(21) Small granary containing grain belonging to younger son.
(22–29) Bean gardens of the various wives and of the mother of the master of the compound.

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(30) Hut common to all female members of the compound for grinding grain.
(31) Entrance to compound.

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Young male children sleep in mother's hut until age of 5. They then get huts of their own. Female children remain in mother's hut until they marry.

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1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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liquid is drained off, leaving the sediment, poured into another pot, boiled and left to cool, and is then ready for use.

*Various Social Regulations.*—Each Katab woman takes one complete day's turn at cooking the food for the entire household, old women alone being exempted from this duty. Thus the principal wife of the head of the household may cook to-day, the second wife to-morrow, a son's wife on the following day, and so on. Numerous jealousies arise from the practice. A wife will take notice of the fact that her husband does not appreciate her cooking, and rival wives will watch to see that the food supplied by the cook of the day represents the amount of corn issued for that day. Women of the compound will charge the cook with having kept back a proportion of the corn in order to sell it in the market for her own advantage. Women are not allowed to cook during their menses. Food cooked by a woman in this condition is said to affect the eyesight of the person who eats it. Married women help their mothers-in-law in various domestic duties, especially in the matter of the preparation of meals, and junior wives assist the senior wives. The senior wife, it may be noted, is the first wife married, and she may be a mere child in years to the second wife. The junior wives eat their meals at the porch of the hut of the senior wife, who is the president of the female society.

Men do not eat with women, and there are numerous rules as to who may eat from the same calabash. A father, for example, would avoid sharing his calabash with his eldest son; it would create disrespect. He would share his meal with his youngest son, or better still, with his grandson. The sons also have their own rules. The eldest son would avoid sharing his calabash with the son immediately junior—he would share it with the next but one, and so on.

A Katab husband sleeps two nights successively with each wife. If he has a hut of his own his wife sleeps there; but otherwise he sleeps in his wife's hut. The first wife, we have said, is the senior wife socially, and she is the "real wife", for even if she abandons her husband she will usually one day return. It is believed that in the future life a man has one wife only and that she is the woman he had first married.

*Daily Life.*—We may now give a rough summary of the daily life of the Katab. Rising at sunrise the head of the household

1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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The head of the family thus acts on behalf of all the members
769 of the family which may include brothers, cousins, and nephews.
But if, for example, the head of the family has a nephew whose
782 father is dead, why should the nephew not go direct to his father's
596 grave? The answer is that he has a living "father" in the person of his uncle, to whom in the ordinary way he takes his troubles. His wives may have run away, or he may have been unsuccessful in begetting children, or unfortunate in other respects. So he goes to his uncle and says: "I am luckless in all I do; perhaps it is because I have offended you." His uncle will take ashes, touch them with his tongue, spit them out, and say: "You have not offended me." The nephew may then say, "Perhaps it is because of some offence I committed against my father in his lifetime." The uncle would reply, "That may be, but let the matter rest at present." If the nephew is still pursued by ill-luck he would again approach his uncle, who would say, "Very well, I will take you to your father's grave and you can there make your offering."

782 The points to be noted are that if you have a living father
you take your trouble to him, and that even if your own father
769 is dead and you have a senior living relative you would not go
592 to your father's grave without reference to him. Other note-
worthy points are that neither males nor females make offerings
[562] at the grave of old women, though the death of an old woman is honoured by the same rites that mark the death of an old man. A woman has to make her petition to a dead father through a male. Women, indeed, appear to engage directly in no religious rites at all. The household head is thus the household priest, and the services of the high priest of the kindred, the Magaji Elenowum, are not ordinarily required even at harvest time, when each household, through the senior male, offers thanks with the first-fruits at the graves of the ancestors for the yearly
[793] supply of food. But on special occasions the assistance of the priest of the kindred, the Magaji Elenowum, is sought. Thus, if things are constantly going wrong in a house recently occupied, the householder may report the matter to the Magaji Elenowum, who may say that the trouble is due to resentment on the part of the ghost of the former householder, either for some neglect during his lifetime or on account of an improper burial. And so the new householder goes to the grave of the former householder and deposits beer and a dish of beniseed, to which some

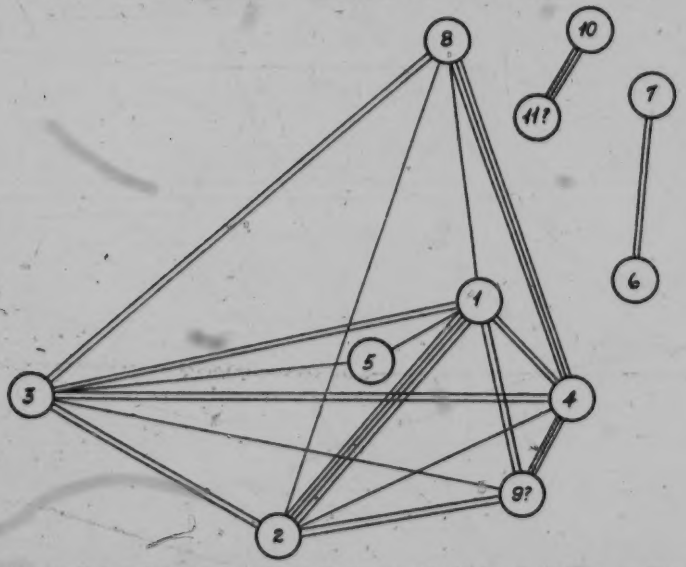
2: Gunn E-4 (no date) 1956 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoro



priest, shrine and ritual, common hunting grounds and, finally, common body of rules relating to marriage.[71]

Lesser social (kinship) groupings are the *tusa* or *uli*, and the *ufam*, which Smith translates as maximal and major lineage, respectively. Both of these are distinguished by common residence, presumably successively more narrowly circumscribed. The maximal lineage has its own head and its own hunting shrine; apparently it may have its distinctive totem species. Members of the major lineage share the spoils of the hunt, and co-operate in beer-making.[72]

Smith agrees with Cole that the compound, or domestic group, among Kagoro may be small. He cites as an example of a large compound at Fadan Kagoro village (population 1,895, with 214 compounds) one with four adult males and at least two women of child-bearing age, and, no doubt, some children. His intensive census of 94 compounds at Fadan Kagoro showed one-third to be composed of




KEY: (1) Fadan Kagoro, (2) Agbam, (3) Chanje, (4) Kpak, (5) Kukum, (6) Kadarko, (7) Makabun, (8) Malagum, (9) Saño, (10) Mafok, (11) Dussai. Position of numerals on diagram corresponds approximately to position, on map of District, of chief village of each Village-area named, except in the case of Nos. (9) and (11), which are located on no map at present available. The number of lines between Village-areas, above, represents the number of *bin* linking any Village-area with neighbouring areas: there are, of course, fewer *bin* than the total number of lines shown linking Village-areas here, since more than two Village-areas are joined together by at least three of the existing *bin* (see list, pp. 92–3).

extended family groups. Members of the average compound number around nine at Fadan Kagoro.

Regarding the compound, Smith states that "the centre of all Kagoro compounds . . . contains the foundation stone, without which the compound does not

[71] Normally it is "the widest unit within which the levirate is practised," but in some cases the *bin*, discussed below, may be so defined.

[72] Re co-operation, see below. Whether or not, rarely or often, the *ufam* constitutes a compound is not entirely clear.

2: Gunn E-4 (no date) 1956 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoro



592 form a separate social unit and which is laid by the householder's father before any building takes place. Above the central stone is a wooden structure supporting a platform on which grain is heaped in the dry season when brought in from the fields."

618 A single named kinship group among Kagoro—the *bin*—remains to be described. Four kinds of *bin* are classified by Smith: the *bin* formed among "dispersed segments of former clan"; the *bin* formed among agnatically related *kwai* of a single village; and two sorts of artificial *bin*, one, an exclusive grouping of *kwai* and the other, a *bin* of which one or more of the participating *kwai* (or lineages thereof) are linked with other *kwai* (or lineages) to constitute a second *bin* (as will be seen in the table below, certain lineages of *kwai* Kpaguwak, Mingio and Mungwop of Fadan Kagoro participate in a total of five *bin*, for example). The *bin* is, then, an association of *kwai*: membership in a *bin* entails exogamy, and prohibits "wife-stealing" within the *bin*: members share "common totem, where these occur" and, in at least the first of the four types described above, a "common clan name and traditions of common descent, sometimes genealogically demonstrable," is not unusual—though in the last of the two types described kinship is purely artificial. As with the *kwai*, exceptions to all rules seem to occur, but it would appear that the *bin* system, even when its deficiencies are taken into account (see diagram on p. 91), must be essential to Kagoro unity, providing as it does links between the various local units (Village-areas). The actual effects of the *bin* system can best be grasped in the diagram, in which ties between villages are shown graphically.

618 The table which follows, an adaptation from Smith's several tables, shows the distribution of *kwai* by villages, and the *bin* linkages of *kwai* (those *kwai* followed by the same number in parentheses constitute a single *bin*), as well as their moiety affiliations.

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| *Village-Area*: *Population* | *Ankwei moiety*: *Kwai—Bin—Population* | | *Kpashan moiety*: *Kwai—Bin—Population* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fadan Kagoro (Fada): 1,895 | Kpaguwak (1, 2) .. | 214 | Kadau (14) .. .. | 412 |
| | Mingio (2, 3, 4) .. | 346 | Kalahu (15) .. .. | 374 |
| | Mungwop (4, 5) .. | 173 | Lawat (16, 17) .. | 376 |
| | | 733 | | 1,162 |
| Agbam (Agwam, Agwan, ? Ogban): 1,422 | Mingio (3) .. .. | 415 | Kacang (18) .. .. | 94 |
| | Mungwop (5) .. .. | 241 | Kamuwang (?) .. | 413 |
| | | 656 | Kutang (14?) .. .. | 194 |
| | | | Lawat (16) .. .. | 85 |
| | | | | 786 |
| Chanje (–i): 113 | Mingio (3) .. .. | 38 | Kutrok (19) .. .. | 33 |
| | Mungwop (5) .. .. | 21 | Sukurak (20) .. .. | 21 |
| | | 59 | | 54 |
| Kpak (Kwak, ? Apak): 1,299 | Atswan (6) .. .. | 74 | Kabiyip (21, 22) .. | 92 |
| | Mingio (3) .. .. | 179 | Kagak (21, 22) .. | 203 |
| | | 253 | Nientswot (21, 22) .. | 256 |
| | | | Kangai (23) .. .. | 9 |
| | | | Micen (23, 24) .. | 222 |
| | | | Kutrok (15, 19, 25) .. | 264 |
| | | | | 1,046 |

000 73. Discussion of land tenure within this Hausa enclave is reserved for the section of the report dealing with Mohammedan Hausa tenure. We are here concerned with any deviations and divergences in the district's pagan tenure from that described in previous paragraphs.

Katab tenure breakdown to individual tenure.

74. Mr Barnicott, District Officer, reported in 1933:—

596 423 241 "Farming . . . . . particularly amongst the Katabawa is carried out on a semi-patriarchal basis. Nearly all the farms of each household belong to the head of the household and are handed down from generation to generation. The householder may not—and often does not—work on the farm himself but, as the owner, makes himself responsible for all the tax of the household; the junior members of the family and the women do the work and since the product of their labour is not strictly their own are not encouraged to accept responsibility for payment of tax".

[311] "The comparatively large area of seven acres is farmed by the average Katab family".

"The farm is run as a family concern and its produce cannot be apportioned . . . . . to each of the individual tax payers varying from one to as many as five or six who work on it".

75. Mr Elliott, District Officer, writes in 1943:—

"Each householder has a home farm in the immediate neighbourhood of his house. The home farm amounts to an area of about one to four acres—roughly an acre per adult male in the household. Then, anything up to four miles away in the open country round the village the householder has his main farm".

● [592] "The size of the household is surprisingly small, perhaps indicating a recent tendency for families to split up and farm separately. The average household . . . . . consisted of an old man . . . . and a son who does all the farming who may perhaps be helped by a younger brother who is too young to pay tax. Out of the 142 farms surveyed the total number of the tax paying (*i.e.*, adult) farmers working them was no more than 205".

361 592 162 76. The following figures compiled from the 1947 tax lists (*see* paragraph 22 above) are of interest:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Katab* | (*a*) Average number of adult males per household ... ... ... ... ... | 2.1 |
| | (*b*) Largest number of adult males per compound ... ... ... ... ... | 11 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Kaje* | (*a*) Average number of adult males per household ... ... ... ... ... | 3.0 |
| | (*b*) Largest number of adult males per compound ... ... ... ... ... | 10 |
| *Chawai* | (*a*) Average number of adult males per household ... ... ... ... ... | 3.0 |
| | (*b*) Largest number of adult males per compound ... ... ... ... ... | 13 |

77. The writer's own experience of the breakdown to individual tenure is that its extent is about half way between that found with the Kagoro and that found amongst the Jaba of the Kachia district. Farms run on the family basis are to be found side by side with farms run individually. Sub-division can take place before a father's death and a married son can demand and is given his individual share as with the Kagoro and Jabawa. Sub-division.

78. Sale, pledging, leasing or renting are not known. They would not be regarded as customary if they occurred. No actual case of its happening was discovered. The complete right of user and passing on of the right of user are acknowledged; but no transaction which would deprive relatives and inheritors of this right are acknowledged. Alienation.

79. Loan is widely practised. It is to all intents and purposes the same transaction as that described for the Kagoro with the substitution of the brewing and sharing of a pot of beer (cf. Jaba) for the gift of a chicken. The same rule as to the building of a house applies. It is of note, however, that whereas in the past loans would never be for a specific duration nowadays a loan is made for a specific period either for one, two or three years after which the borrower would be offered *another* field, if this were available, but in any case would have to leave the original field he had borrowed. There is no intention that loan shall compromise the original holder's title. Loan.

80. In one actual case investigated a man was farming a field close to one of his own and adjoining his house. Both this field and the land on which the house stood were borrowed land. He had inherited them from his father who had been loaned the land thirty years ago. The field was close enough to the house to be considered part of the home farm. For this reason the descendants of the original holder could not claim back the land. This fact and the fact that the land was loaned was admitted by both parties. So was the sequitur to the facts. The descendants of the original holder of the land knew, however, that the moment